

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IN

SUBJECT: MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS SECRETARY VELLODI
ON THE TARAPUR PROBLEM

1. DURING MEA SECRETARY VELLODI'S AFTERNOON MEETING WITH
NEA ASSISTANT SECRETARY ATHERTON SEPTEMBER 28 (SEPTEL) THE
INDIAN OFFICIAL BRIEFLY DISCUSSED THE SAME DAY'S MORNING
ROUND OF TALKS WITH KRATZER ON THE TARAPUR PROBLEM IN WHICH
HE AND INDIAN AEC HEAD SETHNA PARTICIPATED. VELLODI
CHARACTERIZED THE TALKS AS "USEFUL". HE CITED TARAPUR'S
CONTRIBUTION TO MAHARASHTRA'S AND GUJARAT'S POWER SUPPLY
AS VITAL AND NOTED BY WAY OF ILLUSTRATING THE REGION'S
TIGHT POWER SITUATION THAT A THIRTY PERCENT POWER CUT IS
SCHEDULED IN BOMBAY OCTOBER 1. VELLODI COMMENTED THAT
ALTHOUGH INDIA IS GRATEFUL FOR THE FAVORABLE ACTION ON THE
FIRST ENRICHED FUEL LICENSE APPLICATION (SPECIAL THANKS
ARE DUE AMBASSADOR SAXBE, HE ADDED), THERE IS CONSTANT
WORRY AND UNCERTAINTY IN INDIA ABOUT THE CONTINUED SUPPLY.
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2. VELLODI WENT ON TO SAY THAT WHILE INDIA UNDERSTANDS THE U.S. DIFFICULTIES WITH PROLIFERATION, THE MORNING'S TALKS WITH KRATZER DISCLOSED THAT THE US IS NOW SEEKING A RETURN OF ALL THE SPENT FUEL IN THAT FORM. ON THE OTHER HAND, INDIA HAS ALREADY INVESTED SUBSTANTIAL SUMS IN A REPROCESSING PLANT AT TARAPUR PRINCIPALLY TO PROCESS THAT

SPENT FUEL. VELLODI STATED IN CONCLUSION THAT INDIA IS DEPENDENT ON THE U.S. AT TARAPUR BUT THE U.S. HAS A CLEAR OBLIGATION TO PROVIDE THE FUEL, WHICH HE SAID COULD NOT BE OBTAINED ELSEWHERE.

3. AFTER SAYING HE WOULD NOT DISCUSS SPECIFICS OF THE KRATZER-SETHNA TALKS, THEN IN PROCESS, ASSISTANT SECRETARY ATHERTON NOTED THE USG DOES ATTACH IMPORTANCE TO THE QUESTION OF ITS RELIABILITY AS A SUPPLIER, UNDER AN EXISTING AGREEMENT, OF NUCLEAR FUEL. REGARDING THE DISPOSITION OF THE SECOND LICENSE PENDING AT THE NRC, ATHERTON THOUGHT IT WAS LIKELY THERE WOULD BE NO NRC ACTION UNTIL AFTER THE ELECTION. ROBINSON

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